

Curriculum Vitae – Debora Costa

Personal information

Date of birth: 30.12.1993

Nationality: Italian

Language(s): Italian (native speaker), English (fluent), French (fluent), German (beginner)

Contact Information

Research associate

Chair of Marketing and Market Research

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(Status: February 2021)

Short Profile

“I like crossing the imaginary boundaries people set up between different fields—it’s very refreshing. There are lots of tools, and you don’t know which one would work. It’s about being optimistic and trying to connect things.”

-Maryam Mirzakhani-

Debora is currently a research associate (PhD candidate) at the chair of Marketing and Marketing Research. She holds a Bachelor of Science in Statistics and a Master of Arts in Business & Management Engineering at the University of Genova, Italy.

Upon finishing her Master Thesis on the Evaluation and Optimization of the Ligurian Railway Network Timetable she developed her interest in Product and Market dynamics working around three years as Data Scientist for Swiss Re Corporate Solutions in the Marine Insurance.

Broadly, Debora is interested in what drives consumers on a behavioral and technical level and how to control and to facilitate the spread of ethical and sustainable products and behaviors.

Moreover, she is fascinated by the combination of methods and insights from different disciplines as network sciences, economics, behavioral economics, consumer psychology and sociology.

Specifically, the underlying motivation of her research is to increase the well-being of society and of future generation through the raise of a collective conscious and aware behavior. For doing this, she is focusing on sustainable behaviour, where individual aware choices are reflected in a conscious collective action with a positive future impact on society, economics and life in general. Particularly, she is focusing on sustainable food choices and on the implementation of statistical models, as Latent Markov Models, and behavioral experiments for uncovering the drivers, the barriers and the behavioral shift towards sustainable dietary habits.

Research focus: Social networks, Sustainability and Sustainable Spread, Predictive Analytics, Consumer Behavior

Methodological focus: Empirical Modeling, Field Experiments, Latent Markov Models, Causal Inference, Conjoint Analysis

Academic position

10/2019 - UNIVERSITY OF ZÜRICH, SWITZERLAND (60%)
PhD Research Associate in Business Administration, URPP Social Networks
Chair for Marketing and Market Research

Education

03/2017 Escola Europea Barcellona
Visiting student
Focus on “Maritime and Trade Logistics, Theory and Application”

09/2015 - 03/2018 University of Genova, Italy
Master of Arts in Business & Management Engineering
Focus: Discrete Time system Optimization
Thesis: “Railway timetable Evaluation and Optimization through Resilience Indicators”, Supervisor: Prof. Dr. Roberto Sacile in collaboration with Ansaldo STS.

09/2012 – 09/2015 University of Genova, Italy
Master of Science in Statistics
Focus: Machine Learning
Thesis: “Automatic License Plate Detection in traffic images through HOG features”, Supervisor: Prof. Ennio Ottaviani.

Professional Experience

02/2021 - Swiss RE, Switzerland (40%)
Junior Analyst and Project Support

09/2019 - EPIPHANY AG, SCHAAN, LICHTENSTEIN
Consultant Data Science & Predictive Social Analytics

03/2017 - 09/2019 SWISS RE CORPORATE SOLUTION, ITALY
Data Scientist in Marine Insurance
Portfolio analysis, interactive dashboards implementation, statistical risk (insurance losses) modelling and financial KPI's monitoring. Collaboration and set-up of international multi-stakeholder project data-driven oriented. Blue-print digital strategy and digital product design.

03/2015 - 06/2015 ONAIR Srl, ITALY
Statistical Computing Intern

Pattern recognition algorithms development in C++ using Visual Studio IDE and focusing on OpenCV library. Application on traffic monitoring support.

09/2015 - 09/2016 UNIVERSITY OF GENOVA
Scientific & Administrative Collaborator
Administrative work as secretary / reception desk, conversion of internal university archives from paper to digital and catalogue creation, scientific assistant, promotion and organization of scientific seminars

Refereed Conference presentation

*Denoting presenter

05/2021 *Costa, D., Tanase. R., and Algesheimer, A. (2021). "Turning against the habitual self: counter-intentional habits as main barrier for sustainable food choices.", at 50th EMAC conference, Madrid (held online).

05/2021 *Costa, D., Tanase. R., and Algesheimer, A. (2021). "Turning against the habitual self: counter-intentional habits as main barrier for sustainable food choices and how to overcome them.", at the 34TH EMAC Colloquium, Madrid (held online).

06/2020 *Costa, D., Tanase. R., and Algesheimer, A. (2020). "The Green Gap: why we would like to, but we do not behave sustainable", working paper in the Sustainability and CSR track at ISMS Marketing Science Conference 2020 (reviewed in Duke, Fuqua, school of business – held online). Presenter and session chair.

Teaching

As Research Associate at the University of Zürich

HS20- TA Machine Learning - A non-technical introduction (Master lecture)

HS20 - TA Prototyping Machine Learning Products (Master seminar)

FS21 - Responsible – R - A non-technical introduction (Bachelor lecture)

HS21- TA Machine Learning - A non-technical introduction (Master lecture)

HS21- TA Prototyping Machine Learning Products (Master seminar)

Advanced trainings

01/2021 SHIFT Consumer behavior to be sustainable, Prof. Dr. Katherine White, three days course at UZH (CH).

- 01/2021 Experimental Research Design, Prof. Dr. Bob Fennis, EDEN Doctoral Seminar, one week course (online).
- 01/2021 Making a Theory Contribution in Management Research, Prof. Dr. Wolfgang Sofka & Prof. Dr. Christoph Grimpe, Copenhagen Business School(online).
- 01/2021 Moderation, Mediation and Conditional Process Analysis, Prof. Dr. Amanda Montoya, one-week course at GSEMR (online).
- 12/2020 PhD course on Decision Theory, Prof. Dr. Carlos-Alos Ferrer, Department of Neuroeconomics UZH, Zürich.
- 03/2020 PhD seminar on Consumer Behavior, Dr. Wayne D. Hoyer (The James L. Bayless/William S. Farish, Fund Chair for Free Enterprise, Department of Marketing, Mc Combs School of Business, The University of Texas at Austin, three-day workshop, Zürich.
- 11/2019 A theories-in-use approach to theory construction, Ajay Kohli (Gary T. and Elizabeth R. Jones Chair, Georgia Institute of Technology), one-day workshop, IMD Lausanne.

Professional affiliations

Since 2020 - European Marketing Academy (EMAC)

Supervised Thesis

Loris Costacurta (BA), Yunus Ozdemir (BA), Moritz Jäggi (BA), Chanel Docekal (BA), Tatjana Ferri (MA), Matteo Francescone (MA, in progress).